

FACT SHEET
Region 10 Competitiveness in the National Brownfield Grant Competition
July 1, 2008

DATA FOR ANALYSIS

The Office of Brownfield and Land Revitalization (OBLR) in EPA Headquarters has the lead for the Brownfields Program and management of the national competition. They maintain data nationally for proposals received and selected and conduct similar reviews of the national pool for trends in populations served and overall distribution. At Region 10's request, OBLR provided data sets that included all proposals selected by type, region, and with size of populations served for the four years of previous grant competitions (FY04-FY07); a summary of the current FY08 grant cycle with details on the number of proposals received by type, region, ranking of those selected, and whether the populations served for the individual projects would be considered rural or urban.

Region 10 Brownfield staff conducted an analysis of the available data to address the public perceptions of possible bias. The review fell into three general categories:

- Urban vs. rural selection biases
- Preferences for Midwest/Eastern regions vs. the Western Regions (8, 9, 10) proposals
- Region 10 specific proposal biases or inconsistencies in national ranking reviews

FINDINGS

- Urban vs. Rural Biases

The perception that a majority of the proposals selected support urban projects is false. The review of the data nationally over several years shows that the majority of projects selected support rural communities. In fact, over four years 29% went to communities with populations of 15,000 or less.

- Midwest/Eastern vs. Western Regional Biases

The analysis found more grants awarded to Midwestern and Eastern regions, however the number of proposals from those areas has been growing, while the applications from Western states have been declining. In FY04, proposals selected from EPA Regions 8, 9, and 10 represented 26% of the total number selected nationally. In FY08, the percentage was 14%, up from the low in FY07 at 11%. To demonstrate the downward trend in Region 10, there were 49 proposals received in FY05 with 23 selected compared to FY08 with 26 proposals received and 6 selected. The ARC grant program has become increasingly competitive with more Midwestern and Eastern communities submitting proposals.

- National Ranking Review Process Bias

Our regional analysis of the evaluation forms and scores for each of the ranking criteria on proposals submitted by Region 10 showed no inconsistencies in comparison to how proposals were evaluated. This analysis did provide an opportunity to identify themes for special emphasis in training materials for the ARC 2009 Grant cycle. These include ways to improve the description of your community and using demographic data.